

### Related Occupations

Education administrators apply organizational and leadership skills to provide services to individuals. Workers in related occupations include medical and health services managers, social service agency administrators, recreation and park managers, museum directors, library directors, and professional and membership organization executives. Since principals and assistant principals usually have extensive teaching experience, their backgrounds are similar to those of teachers and many school counselors.

### Sources of Additional Information

For information on elementary and secondary school principals, assistant principals, and central office administrators, contact:

• American Federation of School Administrators, 1729 21st St. NW., Washington, DC 20009.

• American Association of School Administrators, 1801 North Moore St., Arlington, VA 22209.

For information on elementary school principals and assistant principals, contact:

• The National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1615 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3483.

For information on collegiate registrars and admissions officers, contact:

• American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, One Dupont Circle NW., Suite 520, Washington, DC 20036-1171.

For information on college and university personnel, contact:

• The College and University Personnel Association, 1233 20th St. NW., Washington, DC 20036-1250.

For information on professional development and graduate programs for college student affairs administrators, visit the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Internet site:

<http://www.naspa.org>

## Employment Interviewers, Private or Public Employment Service

(O\*NET 21508)

### Significant Points

- Although employers prefer applicants with a college degree, educational requirements range from a high school diploma to a master's or doctoral degree.
- Most new jobs will arise in personnel supply firms, especially those specializing in temporary help.

### Nature of the Work

Whether you are looking for a job or trying to fill one, you might need the help of an employment interviewer. These workers, sometimes called personnel consultants, human resources coordinators, personnel development specialists, or employment brokers, help jobseekers find employment and employers find qualified employees. Employment interviewers obtain information from employers as well as jobseekers and put together the best combination of applicant and job.

The majority of employment interviewers are employed in private personnel supply firms or State employment security offices. Those in personnel supply firms who place permanent employees are usually called counselors. These workers offer tips on personal appearance, suggest ways to present a positive image, provide background information on the company with which an interview is scheduled, and recommend interviewing techniques. Employment interviewers in some firms specialize in placing applicants in particular kinds of jobs—for example, secretarial, word processing, computer programming and computer systems analysis, engineering, accounting, law, or health. Counselors in such firms usually have 3 to 5 years of work experience in their field.

Some employment interviewers work in temporary help services companies, placing the company's employees in firms that need temporary help. Employment interviewers take job orders from client firms and match their requests against a list of available workers. They select the most qualified workers available and assign them to the firms requiring assistance.

Regular evaluation of employee job skills is an important part of the job for interviewers working in temporary help services companies. Initially, interviewers evaluate or test new employees' skills to determine their abilities and weaknesses. The results are kept on file and referred to when filling job orders. In some cases, the company trains employees to improve their skills, so interviewers periodically reevaluate or retest employees to identify any new skills they may have developed.

Traditionally, firms that placed permanent employees dealt with highly skilled applicants, such as lawyers or accountants, and those placing temporary employees dealt with less skilled workers, such as secretaries or data entry operators. However, temporary help services increasingly place workers with a wide range of educational backgrounds and work experience. Businesses are now turning to temporary employees to fill all types of positions—from clerical to managerial, professional, and technical—to reduce the wage and benefit costs associated with hiring permanent employees.

The duties of employment interviewers in job service centers differ somewhat from those in personnel supply firms because applicants may lack marketable skills. In these centers, jobseekers present resumes and fill out forms regarding education, job history, skills, awards, certificates, and licenses. An employment interviewer reviews these forms and asks the applicant about the type of job sought and salary range desired.

Because an applicant in these centers may have unrealistic expectations, employment interviewers must be tactful, but persuasive. Some applicants are high school dropouts or have poor English skills, a history of drug or alcohol dependency, or a prison record. The amount and nature of special help for such applicants vary from State to State. In some States, it is the employment interviewer's responsibility to counsel hard-to-place applicants and refer them elsewhere for literacy or language instruction, vocational training, transportation assistance, child care, and other services. In other States, specially trained counselors perform this task.

Applicants may also need help identifying the kind of work for which they are best suited. The employment interviewer evaluates the applicant's qualifications and either chooses an appropriate occupation or class of occupations or refers the applicant for vocational testing. After identifying an appropriate job type, the employment interviewer searches the file of job orders seeking a possible job match and refers the applicant to the employer if a match is found. If no match is found, the interviewer shows the applicant how to use listings of available jobs.



*Employment interviewers need good interpersonal skills.*

Besides helping individuals find jobs, employment interviewers help firms fill job openings. The services they provide depend on the company or type of agency they work for and the clientele it serves. In most of these agencies, employers usually pay private agencies to recruit workers. The employer places a "job order" with the agency describing the opening and listing requirements including education, licenses or credentials, and experience. Employment interviewers often contact the employer to determine their exact personnel needs. The employment interviewer then reviews the job requirements and the jobseeker qualifications to determine the best possible match of position and applicant. Although computers are increasingly used to keep records and match employers with jobseekers, personal contact with an employment interviewer remains an essential part of an applicant's job search.

A private industry employment interviewer must also be a salesperson. Counselors pool together a group of qualified applicants and try to sell them to many different companies. Often a consultant will call a company that has never been a client with the aim of filling their employment needs. Maintaining good relations with employers is an important part of the employment interviewer's job because this helps assure a steady flow of job orders. Being prepared to fill an opening quickly with a qualified applicant impresses employers most and keeps them as clients.

### Working Conditions

Employment interviewers usually work in comfortable, well-lit offices, often using a computer to match information about employers and jobseekers. Some interviewers, however, may spend much of their time out of the office conducting interviews. The work can be hectic, especially in temporary help service companies that supply clients with immediate help for short periods of time. The private placement industry is competitive and, some overtime may be required.

### Employment

Employment interviewers held about 66,000 jobs in 1998. Over half worked in the private sector for personnel supply services, typically for employment placement firms or temporary help services companies. About 2 out of 10 worked for State or local government. Others were employed by organizations that provide various services, such as job training and vocational rehabilitation.

Employees of career consulting or outplacement firms are not included in these estimates. Workers in these firms help clients market themselves; they do not act as job brokers, nor do they match individuals with particular vacancies. (Employment counselors, who perform these functions, are discussed in the *Handbook* statement on counselors.)

### Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Although most public and private agencies prefer to hire college graduates for interviewer jobs, a degree is not always necessary. Hiring requirements in the private sector reflect a firm's management approach as well as the placements in which its interviewers specialize. Those who place highly-trained individuals such as accountants, lawyers, engineers, physicians, or managers usually have some training or experience in the field in which they are placing workers. Thus, a bachelor's, master's, or even a doctoral degree may be a prerequisite for some interviewers. Even with the right education, however, sales ability is still required to succeed in the private sector.

Educational requirements play a lesser role for interviewers placing clerks or laborers—a high school diploma may be sufficient. In these positions, qualities such as energy level, telephone voice, and sales ability take precedence over educational attainment. Other desirable qualifications for employment interviewers include good communications skills, a desire to help people, office skills, and adaptability. A friendly, confidence-winning manner is an asset because personal interaction plays a large role in this occupation. Increasingly, employment interviewers use computers as a tool; thus, basic knowledge of computers is helpful.

Entry-level employment interviewer positions in the public sector are usually filled by college graduates, even though the positions do not always require a bachelor's degree. Some States allow substitution of suitable work experience for college education. Suitable experience is usually defined as working in close contact with the public or spending time in other jobs, including clerical jobs, in a job service office. In States that permit employment interviewers to engage in counseling, course work in counseling may be required.

Most States and many large city and county governments use some form of merit system for hiring interviewers. Applicants may take a written exam, undergo a preliminary interview, or submit records of their education and experience for evaluation. Those who meet the standards are placed on a list from which the top-ranked candidates are selected for later interviews and possible hiring.

Advancement as an employment interviewer in the public sector is often based on a system providing regular promotions and salary increases for those meeting established standards. Advancement to supervisory positions is highly competitive. In personnel supply firms, advancement often depends on one's success in placing workers and usually takes the form of greater responsibility and higher income. Successful individuals occasionally establish their own businesses.

### Job Outlook

Employment in this occupation is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2008. The majority of new jobs will arise in personnel supply firms, especially those specializing in temporary help. Job growth is not anticipated in State job service offices because of budgetary limitations, the growing use of computerized job matching and information systems, and increased contracting out of employment services to private firms. In addition to openings resulting from growth, a small number of openings will stem from the need to replace experienced interviewers who transfer to other occupations, retire, or stop working for other reasons.

Economic expansion and new business formation should mean growing demand for the services of personnel supply firms and employment interviewers. Firms that lack the time or resources to develop their own screening procedures will continue to turn to personnel firms. Rapid expansion of firms supplying temporary help in particular will be responsible for much of the growth in this occupation. Businesses of all types are turning to temporary help services companies for additional workers to handle short-term assignments, staff one-time projects, launch new programs, and reduce wage and benefit costs associated with hiring permanent employees.

Entry into this occupation is relatively easy for college graduates and for people who have had some college courses, except in those positions specializing in placement of workers with highly specialized training, such as lawyers, doctors, and engineers.

Employment interviewers who place permanent workers may lose their jobs during recessions because employers reduce or eliminate hiring for permanent positions during downturns in the economy. State job service employment interviewers are less susceptible to layoffs than those who place permanent or temporary personnel in the private sector.

### Earnings

Median annual earnings of employment interviewers in 1998 were \$29,800. The middle 50 percent earned between \$23,520 and \$39,600. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$18,420 and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$73,180. Employment interviewers earn slightly more in urban areas.

Earnings in private firms vary, in part, because the basis for compensation varies. Workers in personnel supply firms tend to be paid on a commission basis; those in temporary help service companies receive a salary. When workers are paid on a commission basis, total earnings depend on the type and number of placements. In general, those who place more highly skilled or hard-to-find employees earn more. An interviewer or counselor working strictly on a commission

basis often makes around 30 percent of what he or she bills the client, although this varies widely from firm to firm.

Some employment interviewers work on a salary-plus-commission basis because they fill difficult or highly specialized positions requiring long periods of search. The salary is usually small by normal standards; however, it guarantees these individuals security through slow times. The commission provides the incentive and opportunity for higher earnings.

Some personnel supply firms employ new workers for a 2- to 3-month probationary period during which they draw a regular salary. This gives new workers time to develop their skills and acquire clients while simultaneously giving employers an opportunity to evaluate them. If hired, their earnings are then usually based on commission.

### Related Occupations

Employment interviewers serve as intermediaries for jobseekers and employers. Workers in several other occupations do similar jobs. Personnel officers, for example, screen and help hire new employees, but they concern themselves mainly with the hiring needs of the firm; they never represent individual jobseekers. Personnel officers may also have additional duties in areas such as payroll or benefits management.

Career counselors help students and alumni find jobs, but they primarily emphasize career counseling and decision making, not placement. Counselors in community organizations and vocational rehabilitation facilities help clients find jobs, but they also assist with drug or alcohol dependencies, housing, transportation, child care, and other problems that stand in the way of finding and keeping a job.

### Sources of Additional Information

For information on a career as an employment interviewer/counselor, contact:

- National Association of Personnel Services, 3133 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305. Internet: <http://www.napsweb.org>
- American Staffing Association, 277 South Washington St., Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314. Internet: <http://www.natss.org>

For information on a career as an employment interviewer in State employment security offices, contact:

- Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies, 444 North Capitol St. NW., Suite 142, Washington, DC 20001. Internet: <http://www.icesa.org>

## Engineering, Natural Science, and Computer and Information Systems Managers

(O\*NET 13017A, 13017B, and 13017C)

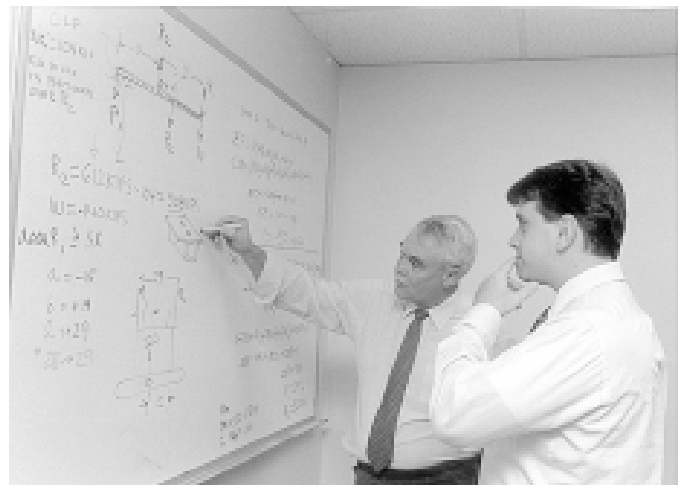
### Significant Points

- Projected job growth stems primarily from rapid growth among computer-related occupations.
- Employers prefer managers with advanced technical knowledge and strong communication and administrative skills.

### Nature of the Work

Engineering, natural science, and computer and information systems managers plan, coordinate, and direct research, design, production, and computer-related activities. They may supervise engineers, scientists, technicians, computer specialists, and information technology workers, along with support personnel.

These managers use advanced technical knowledge of engineering, science, and computer and information systems to oversee a variety of activities. They determine scientific and technical goals within broad



*Engineering managers direct the technical work of their staff.*

outlines provided by top management. These goals may include the redesigning of an aircraft, improvements in manufacturing processes, the development of large computer networks, or advances in scientific research. Managers make detailed plans for the accomplishment of these goals—for example, working with their staff, they may develop the overall concepts of a new product or identify technical problems standing in the way of project completion.

To perform effectively, they must also possess knowledge of administrative procedures, such as budgeting, hiring, and supervision. These managers propose budgets for projects and programs, and make decisions on staff training and equipment purchases. They hire and assign scientists, engineers, computer specialists, information technology workers, and support personnel to carry out specific parts of the projects. They supervise the work of these employees, review their output, and establish administrative procedures and policies.

In addition, these managers use communication skills extensively. They spend a great deal of time coordinating the activities of their unit with other units or organizations. They confer with higher levels of management; with financial, production, marketing, and other managers; and with contractors and equipment and materials suppliers.

Engineering managers supervise people who design and develop machinery, products, systems, and processes; or direct and coordinate production, operations, quality assurance, testing, or maintenance in industrial plants. Many are plant engineers, who direct and coordinate the design, installation, operation, and maintenance of equipment and machinery in industrial plants. Others manage research and development teams that produce new products and processes or improve existing ones.

Natural science managers oversee the work of life and physical scientists, including agricultural scientists, chemists, biologists, geologists, medical scientists, and physicists. These managers direct research and development projects, and coordinate activities such as testing, quality control, and production. They may work on basic research projects or on commercial activities. Science managers sometimes conduct their own research in addition to managing the work of others.

Computer and information systems managers direct the work of systems analysts, computer programmers, and other computer-related workers. These managers plan and coordinate activities such as the installation and upgrading of hardware and software; programming and systems design; the development of computer networks; and the implementation of Internet and intranet sites. They analyze the computer and information needs of their organization and determine personnel and equipment requirements. They assign and review the work of their subordinates, and purchase necessary equipment.